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food
and the
Teenager



TEENAGERS AND FOOD

By June R. Wyman

their eating habits

• "SIX OUT OF EVERY ten teenage girls and four out of every ten teenage boys have poor diets," says a food facts leaflet from Rutgers University.

• A large number of high school students studied by Hodges and Krehl, nutrition researchers at the University of Iowa, had disturbingly high cholesterol levels and an abnormally large intake of fat.

• A survey of Waltham, Mass., schoolchildren showed that, at a time when one out of every four mothers bearing her first child is still in her teens, teenage girls had the poorest food habits of any age group.

These findings document a concern that's not new but still every bit as disconcerting as ever: teenagers don't eat right.

Psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers explains some of the factors causing poor eating habits this way:

"Adolescence is a time of great turmoil. Young people stuff themselves to make themselves happier and tend to overeat in spurts, generally at times when they're alone and feeling sorry for themselves. They tend at these times to eat the handiest foods, the ones that don't require preparation, such as potato chips.

"Then they realize they are overweight and go on a crash diet, which makes them so unhappy and hungry that they start to overeat once again. It's circular."

Teens may skip meals, especially

breakfast, she also points out, because they don't have the patience to sit down and eat when they're anticipating the day.

For some adolescents, eating habits become a tool of rebellion. According to Dr. Brothers, teenagers use food as a means of rebelling against their parents . . . they eat what the group wants them to eat, not what parents advise. They may favor unusual combinations of foods or restrict themselves to a few favorites.

Lack of knowledge about nutrition also contributes. Researchers on the staff of Dr. Fredrick Stare, Chairman of the Harvard University Department of Nutrition, have found that adolescents have only sketchy information about the caloric content and nutritional values of foods.

The most severe dietary deficiencies occur among teenage girls. Dr. Jean Mayer, the President's consultant on nutrition and a member of the Harvard team, analyzed a certain nervous loss of appetite which is limited almost entirely to teenage and young adult girls. He found that it was simply "an exaggeration of tendencies present in many 'normal' adolescent girls . . . who are obsessed with the desire to become thinner and who periodically go on extremely rigid diets to lose weight in spite of the resultant hunger and fatigue." Dr. Mayer warns that these dieting techniques, so prevalent among teenage girls, are particularly dangerous.

The rapid growth taking place during adolescence makes it essential for teenagers to maintain a healthful diet. "Teenage boys and girls face striking changes in physical, mental, and emotional development," report Clara Taylor and Orrea Pye of Teacher's College, Columbia University. "For the whole period from 11 to about 15 years in girls and from 12 to 18 years in boys, the food requirements will be much higher than for adults of corresponding size."

What can be done to improve the nutritional status of teenagers?

A survey made of the food habits of Waltham, Mass., schoolchildren showed that junior high school students attending a school where the school lunch program was available ate considerably less concentrated sweets than those attending a school where lunch wasn't available.

In their work with high schoolers, the University of Iowa researchers found that lunch consumed in the school cafeteria often provided the most balanced meal of the day. Students who left the school building at lunch time, however, usually ate such unsuitable combinations of foods as french fries, candy, and soda.

Dr. Brothers addresses this problem when she says, "School lunch can be helpful if EVERYONE eats it." Pat Rimmel, nutritionist on Dr. Stare's Harvard staff, agrees that the "open campus" situation, where teens are allowed to leave the building for lunch, can create problems.

One special way school lunch programs have been fighting teen malnutrition is to involve students in the menu planning process. "If the young people are more involved, points out Dr. Brothers, "it becomes less of an 'adult' idea." ☆



writing their own MENUS

TAKE AIR NORTH'S SHUTTLE flight from Syracuse through the North Country of New York State. Ride the little twenty-seater plane to the last stop. Massena—you might have a box of parakeets for company—and then follow a winding country road a little farther east, past magnificent rivers with names like Trout, Little Salmon and Deer, past Indian longhouses and 400-year-old churches. This is the way to the Salmon River Central school system.

This system consists of Salmon River Central (Fort Covington, N.Y.), which runs from kindergarten through 12th grade, and the St. Regis Mohawk School, which runs from nursery through third grade. St. Regis is located on a Mohawk Indian Reservation, which is bisected by the U.S.-Canadian border. The reservation is home for about 4,000 Mohawks, many of whom work in the Reservation's lacrosse stick factory.

Mohawk children attend St. Regis for the first years of elementary

school and then transfer to Salmon River Central. St. Regis also has a Head Start program for pre-kindergartners.

Every elementary schooler in both schools receives a free breakfast every morning, through programs of the Food and Nutrition Service and the State Department of Education. It's often an elaborate affair; orange juice, cream of wheat cereal, bacon, and rolls with butter and milk might be served on a typical morning.

Lunch is served to all the children in the school system, either free or costing the child only 25¢, supported by USDA, the State, and the school's own funds. A total of 1,900 lunches are prepared daily for the whole school system; of these, about 1,000 are free.

Salmon River Central's lunch program is over 13 years old; St. Regis has had a lunch program since the early '40's. Breakfast at both schools, however, was begun as a pilot project

three years ago and has only been served regularly for the last 2 years.

One unusual feature of the Salmon River Central lunch program is that the menus are largely written by students themselves. The student menu-planners are home economics pupils whose names are printed above the menus on the month's schedule. These students also teach basic nutrition to the younger children.

Miss Sara Hanley, school lunch supervisor for the system, said the students readily accept the menus their fellow students write.

Salmon River Central was one of ten New York State schools recently selected by the State Department of Education for a consumer grant. This money will be used to teach better buying skills, via field trips, to home economic students.

This grant will add one more dimension to a school system where the students, teachers, and supervisors are totally involved in the feeding programs. ☆

Student menu planning has been part of Salmon River Central's lunch program for 12 years. This year 35 ninth graders work with their home economics teacher and the school lunch supervisor to plan meals, which are prepared by the cafeteria staff and served to the entire student body at least 2 or 3 times a week. Using a basic nutrition textbook (left), each student writes several menus which are graded for nutritional value and practicability. As a special project (below), the home economics students practice preparing a meal planned by one of their classmates in a luncheon served to a group of first graders.





SUMMER FEEDING: EAST & WEST

LAST SUMMER, from a corner of Rochester, N.Y., came new ways to offer city children alternatives to hot, crowded streets. The corner was Rochester's Baden-Ormond Model Cities area, home of the Baden Street Settlement House.

When Baden Street's director,

William Hall, came to the settlement house two and a half years ago, he found a neighborhood filled with kids with "nothing to do."

"You just couldn't imagine," he says, "we had all kinds of behavioral problems."

With a young, energetic and dedicated staff, Hall set out to develop community projects for the neighborhood youth. In addition to year-round day care and recreational programs for children, they organized special summer programs, which provided nourishing meals as well as activities.

Last year over 550 Rochester kids took part in the center's three summer feeding programs, administered by the N.Y. State Department of Education with financial support from USDA under the FNS Special Food Service Program for Children.

The day camp program provided a welcome substitute for the hot city for 265 local kids, who put in full days from 8:30 to 4 for 7 weeks at Mendon Ponds Park, 12 miles from Rochester.

Activities at camp included crafts, sports and other treats. The campers had to bring their own food before last summer, when for the first time they received lunch at camp.

In another summer project, the Pied Piper program, the staff found a unique way to reach kids who never made it to the settlement house. If the kids didn't come to the settlement house, the settlement came to them! Counselors brought recreation equipment and cold-pack lunches into the streets. The lunches made such a hit that children were still coming in the fall, unwilling to believe the program was over.

Director William Hall was pleased with Pied Piper, which was designed largely to reach Spanish-speaking children, the most hesitant to leave home. This is significant because 80 percent of the Baden Street area is Spanish-speaking or black. The program was so successful, in fact, that it expanded beyond Baden Street's service area.

Baden Street also operated its day care program for preschoolers and its program for 5-to-6-year-olds throughout the summer. About fifty 5- and 6-

year-old children were at the settlement house from 7:30 to 5:30 and ate breakfast, lunch and snacks there. During the school year, this is an after-school program from 1 to 5:30 PM, which enables mothers to work full-time.

The center's day care program, explains the program's director Mrs. Minnie Caldwell, tries to give children "a full, meaningful preschool experience." During the summer Mrs. Caldwell and her staff, which includes a nurse, had charge of 120 to 150 children ranging in age from 3 to 5 years old.

Children in this program for the whole day got breakfast, lunch and two snacks. Breakfast and snacks were prepared in the center's own kitchen, and lunch was catered by a local firm. The building is in the process of being remodeled; when the new kitchen is completed with the aid of USDA equipment funds, both lunch and breakfast will be made there.

In the short time since Hall and his staff have been at Baden Street Settlement House—which was founded in 1901—the neighborhood children have come a long way. There has been a decided decrease in violence. Since the advent of Baden Street's federally funded free breakfast program, there have been far fewer behavioral problems in school. And the center has become so popular that it has more kids than it can service.

Baden Street, funded almost entirely by the Community Chest, has gotten into almost every aspect of the community's problems. Projects now underway include casework, a community-owned cooperative supermarket, a welfare rights group, tenants associations, senior citizens groups, and credit counseling. ☆

HOW DID SUMMER feeding work in Seattle?

The Mayor's Youth Division—staffed mostly by hip, concerned young people—knew by March 1971 that when the school year ended in June, thousands of hungry children might go without lunch.

To help do something about this, the Youth Division set out in the spring to develop a summer feeding program which could receive financial support from the Special Food Service Program for Children. This 3-year-old program provides Federal cash and food assistance to nonprofit service institutions such as day care centers, settlement houses, and recreation centers that operate programs of organized activity—recreational, educational, or cultural. With such assistance these institutions are able to make breakfast, lunch, supper, and morning and afternoon supplements available to children from low-income areas, or from areas with many working mothers. The programs are sponsored and operated by local officials through their State educational agencies or the regional offices of the Food and Nutrition Service.

According to Mayor's Youth Division planner Stephen Boyd, a sack lunch meeting nutritional requirements seemed the best way to get meals to needy children participating in recreational programs operated by various agencies scattered throughout the city.

After renting kitchen facilities at Roosevelt High School, the division hired Mrs. Dorothy Shiplet, a former school lunch manager, to prepare the lunches. Five city school lunch staffers and 35 people from the college work-study program and the Neighborhood Youth Corps were to help her.

Mrs. Shiplet contributed more than professional skill. "She acted as production manager, counselor, policeman, arbitrator, ramrod, and sometimes mother to everyone in the program—including me," Boyd said. In "Ma Shiplet's kitchen," as a Seattle newspaper called it, lunches were prepared and refrigerated overnight in amounts corresponding to standing orders from the summer programs. Any variation in the orders had to be phoned in by one p.m. the day before delivery. About one-fourth of the summer program operators picked up their lunches at the Roosevelt High School production center. The rest of the lunches were delivered in four small vans.

It didn't work perfectly. A few agencies stored or distributed the



lunches improperly. "I attempted to deal with these problems as they occurred," Steve Boyd said. "Throughout the summer I visited nearly all of the locations to check distribution procedures and eligibility of kids fed."

Considering the size of the program—an average of 4,600 children served lunch daily, a total of 190,000 lunches prepared from June through August for 99 programs—the snafu rate was low.

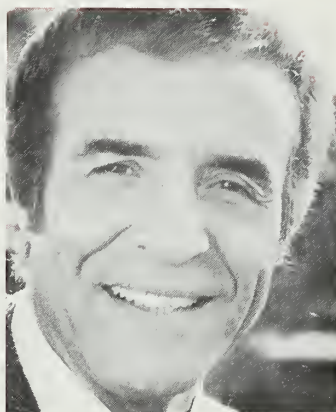
Steve Boyd made a survey at the end of the summer to find out what the agencies and the kids thought of the lunches and the delivery system. Most of the agencies rated the program good, a few excellent and a few only adequate. Only four of the agencies serving lunches complained that variety was inadequate; three said the guidelines for the children's eligibility were inadequately explained; and one said delivery was consistently late.

Tuna sandwiches, fruit juice, fresh fruit, and cookies ranked highest in popularity with the kids. Many said the sandwiches could be improved if less butter were used.

The agencies praised the program and what it did for the children. However, Boyd pointed out, some of their suggestions were for the most part impractical. "For example," he said, "salad-type sandwiches proved to be too much of a health hazard. Hot lunches are not within the scope of our program. Many suggestions were found to be economically unfeasible."

The job of financing the program was shared by a number of sources. USDA reimbursed part of the cost of the lunches. Funds were also obtained from the Model Cities Program and the city of Seattle. The college work-study program and the Department of Labor's Neighborhood Youth Corps paid for most of the workers in "Ma Shiplet's kitchen."

Mrs. Sydel Lemerman of the FNS Regional Office in San Francisco, who worked with the Youth Division to get the program set up, offered a succinct summary of the summer program. "It was," she said, "a beautiful operation." ☆



ROBERTO CLEMENTE, World Series hero. Dustin Hoffman, movie star. Roy Wilkins, NAACP chief. Dr. Joyce Brothers, psychologist.

All of these people are supporters of the Food Stamp and National School Lunch Programs.

Many people may be eligible to receive food stamps, but not know it. And many people may be interested in helping to expand the School Lunch Program, but not know how.

It's hard to get the message across to everyone on how to enroll or how to help. But if the voice on the radio says, "This is Count Basie, talking about school lunches," it's a good guess that the audience is likely to

sit up and take notice.

The Count and many other stars have donated their time and support for these programs. In addition to those already mentioned, the volunteers who have recorded spot announcements include: actresses Julie Harris, Jane Russell, Rita Moreno, and Veronica Lake; actors E. G. Marshall and Ricardo Montalban; jazz pianist Les McCann; singer O. C. Smith; ballplayer Luis Aparicio; and Puerto Rican TV personality Mercedez Menendez. Miss Moreno, Mr. Montalban, Mr. Clemente, Mr. Aparicio, and Miss Menendez taped spots in both English and Spanish.

The spots run 30 or 60 seconds. The food stamp set briefly describes

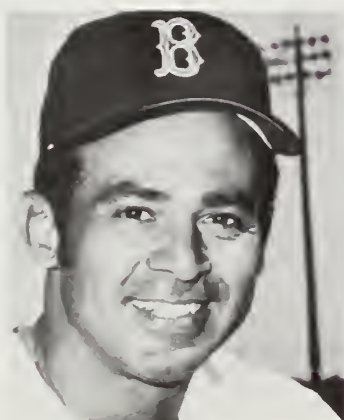
the function of the stamps in providing more and better food to low-income families. They emphasize the often overlooked fact that a participant need not be receiving public assistance.

The school lunch spots stress the relationship between hunger and lowered ability to learn in school. While millions of children eat school lunches, millions of others attend schools that do not participate in the program.

Several hundred radio stations across the Nation have so far reported playing the school lunch spots as a public service. No tally is available yet on the use of the food stamp program tapes. ☆



*Celebrities include
(left to right):
Ricardo Montalban
Julie Harris
Dustin Hoffman
Roberto Clemente
Dr. Joyce Brothers
Les McCann
Roy Wilkins
Veronica Lake
E. G. Marshall
Rita Moreno
Luis Aparicio
Count Basie
Jane Russell*



celebrities air food help message

GEORGE REYNOLDS, engineer, was about to embark on a mission impossible . . . or so it seemed. The ITT Continental Baking Co. had told George to design an equipment package for their new prepacked, frozen school lunches. But the setup had to be so low-cost and easy to handle that even the oldest, smallest school could use it.

George vanished into the basement of ITT headquarters in Rye, N.Y., and emerged 4 months later with the problem solved. His package consisted of three basic modular units—freezer, refrigerator and oven—and cost about 20 percent of what a conventional kitchen would cost.

An ITT spokesman explained that the basis for the new system was the way in which airlines store and provide meals. The system works on the same principle that makes it possible for 120 meals to be served from a tiny galley in the back of an airplane.

One of the first successes for the frozen prepackaged lunch program was in Bridgeport, Conn., where the system was tested. It proved to be an innovation in school food service that may be one answer for schools now without a feeding program.

Bridgeport, which began its lunch program 2 years ago, has a high proportion of poor children and small old schools. It buys from both ITT and the Pronto Food Corp., which deliver meals once a month to the city's central freezer-warehouse in either refrigerated boxcars or trucks.

Every schoolday the city's trucks deliver each school's meals for the following day so that each school has a one-day advance supply. Each meal consists of a hot pack (entree) and a cold pack (bread, butter, dessert, and utensils), which are kept frozen at the school after delivery.

The afternoon before they are to be served, the cold packs go into the refrigerator to thaw out. About 1½ hours before lunch, the hot packs come out of the freezer and into wire baskets. Stacks of these loaded baskets are wheeled into the convection oven and are piping hot in about 30 minutes. Meanwhile, the cold packs have been taken from the refrigerator.



Kids are eating "Airline Lunches"

food and nutrition



Youngsters at the Waltersville School in Bridgeport, Conn., pick up the hot entrees and cold portions of their lunches. Because of the ease of handling these pre-packaged frozen meals, they move through the line at more than twice the normal speed. Special ethnic food items are being tested in Bridgeport, which has one of the largest Puerto Rican populations in the country.



Each child then picks up his packs and milk, eats, and throws away the trays. In some schools these trays are recycled. They are thrown into a crusher and sold to scrap aluminum companies; the profit goes into the school's lunch program account.

Newark, N.J., one of the largest school systems in the East, uses frozen prepackaged meals in several schools, some of which had no equipment at all.

A food purveyor buys the meals from Pronto and ITT, rents oven space in a bakery, heats the meals and delivers them hot to the school at an additional cost for each meal. The hot and cold packs arrive separately at the schools in insulated boxes, which hold the food for 2 or 3 hours until lunchtime.

In Buffalo, N.Y., 52 of the 99 schools are using a similar system. Lunches are manufactured by the Freezer Queen Co. and delivered by Service Systems, Inc., a division of Del Monte.

Ed DeGaspar, school food service director, likes this arrangement because "we have many situations where there is literally no space, not even a closet." He also uses frozen prepackaged meals to supplement schools with on-site facilities that can't keep up with demand.

Julius Jacobs, New York City's school food chief, is experimenting with frozen meals from ITT, Schrafft's, and General Foods. Says Lois Mace, food technology supervisor, "We save money on the purchasing, warehousing and distribution of these meals." Robert Nicholson of the Baltimore, Md., schools also experimented with several systems and products before he found the one that was acceptable.

There are variations on the theme. Some firms will sell frozen food, in bulk or individual plates, to a school with facilities which then "satellites" lunches to neighboring schools. Some school systems, such as Baltimore's, prefer to make their own cold packs and purchase only hot entrees, or to use some equipment they may already have.

The potential of this system goes beyond school lunch. Larger-portion meals for senior citizen feeding programs and meals which can be han-

dled outside for summer programs (anticipating a trend towards year-round schools) are now in the works.

ITT estimates the cost of equipment at \$3800 for serving 400 to 600 lunches, and \$6000 for 800 to 1,000 meals. Bridgeport school food service director, Thomas Carroll, says that the frozen prepackaged meals, including everything (administration, delivery, labor, food) cost the city 63¢; meals prepared on-site cost him 72¢.

The system pays for itself in many ways. The facilities can be used to heat meals for adult gatherings (such as PTA meetings) and for summer feeding. Labor costs, too, are reduced substantially.

Schools using frozen prepackaged meals point out that there are also non-financial advantages. Since it takes much less time for the children to pick up their lunches, they are no longer irritated by waiting in long lines. There is the convenience, ease of preparation, and simple disposal.

Cleanliness is assured because each lunch is packed under sanitary conditions by experienced companies. There is less chance of fire hazards because it doesn't produce the grease and fumes of an on-site kitchen. And the lunch can be eaten anywhere, in classrooms or auditoriums if need be.

A major plus factor for harried school food service directors is the system's "easy accountability." It is very simple to keep track of how many lunches are used per day, where they are used, and how many are left over. And all portions are uniform in quality and quantity, a feature which pleases many parents.

Some companies supply educational materials with their lunches, an additional boon. One company, for example, supplies colorful nutrition posters and napkins and history lessons on the foil which covers the lunch plate. It also offers several ethnic foods, including a Puerto Rican dessert and Southern meals with black-eyed peas, ham, and collard greens. This familiarizes children with different kinds of foods.

To see how acceptable the new system was, Bridgeport officials separated and weighed the garbage from their pilot lunch programs to find out

what the children liked best, and discussed the food with students and parents. The amount of food consumed, they found, was unusually high.

Tom Carroll of Bridgeport points out that "no matter what the school's condition is, with a little wiring and a little imagination you can get this scheme into any school.

"Now," he concluded, "with USDA support on food and this system, there is no reason why any school can't have a lunch program." ☆

GOING MARKETING FOR DONATED FOODS

THE NEWEST WAY TO distribute USDA donated foods is proving to be the most popular, too.

In little more than a year, distribution centers in 91 counties have switched to "self-service" in dispensing Federal foods to low-income families. That brings to 95 the number of self-service counties in 11 States. The total also includes the first self-service setup on an Indian reservation.

Through "self-service," needy families participating in the Food Distr



ution Program can now "shop" for their food in renovated food centers that resemble grocery stores. With the dignity of cash customers and using a shopping cart, they can wander down aisles and select the foods they want.

The amount of each item a recipient can select is dependent on his family size. A family of four, for example, can select among other items, five 1-lb. packages of butter; one 10-lb. bag of whole wheat flour; four 16-oz. jars of corn syrup blend; and

eight pint-size cans of evaporated milk, etc.

At the distribution center in Hillsboro, Texas—a bustling agricultural community in the heart of Hill County—signs posted above each item aid shoppers in figuring out how much food to take. Recipients push their carts around the store, following painted arrows, and bring their foods to a check-out counter. There they watch Myrtie Brannan, a community service aide, check off the items on a distribution card as a clerk calls them

out. Then recipients sign for the items and exit out a rear door.

Although most of the 2,000 recipients who shop at the center each month have no trouble understanding the new system, a staff is on hand to help those who do.

Hill County previously had an "over the counter" distribution system in which foods were boxed and handed to recipients. The system was efficient, but more time-consuming. Most important, however, recipients often felt they had no choice in se-



lecting their foods.

With self-service, recipients feel more involved in the free food program and less pressured to get through food lines quickly. They like the new "supermarket" system and the foods as well. One woman, in fact, has developed a recipe for prune cake using only commodity items. With self-service, also, labor is reduced in handling commodities and accounting and program control are made simpler.

We've found that self-service is a

morale booster for the recipient," says Tom Baase, assistant manager of the food distribution center in Kenosha, Wisconsin. "Freedom of choice is one of the elements which creates a better attitude towards receiving donated foods."

Such attitudes are essential, the center's director Louis Dawson feels, if all of the needy are to be reached.

"Our primary tool for getting more persons in to receive food aid has been word of mouth," Dawson explained. "If a recipient finds that

there is a pleasant atmosphere at the center, he is likely to pass the good word along."

In the event the recipient doesn't know the number, Kenosha has installed a new "Food Help Program" telephone number in an FNS pilot program to inform people about food aid. The number is listed in the city phone directory alphabetically under "FOOD." Efforts to make the number well-known are underway by USDA and the Wisconsin Bell Telephone Company.

At the Kenosha center, space is

"Convenient," "smooth," and "flexible" are just three of the many terms used to describe self-service centers across the country. Food managers report that the new system saves both time and labor and makes it easier for persons to receive donated foods. Needy families, meanwhile, report that the system allows them to take their time and choose the foods they want. At the entrance to the centers, recipients are greeted by a smiling clerk who hands them a "shopping list," then directs them to an adjoining room. There, recipients find that overhead signs (far left) aid them in determining how much food to take. At the end of their shopping trip, recipients stack their food on a check-out counter by placing all similar items together.



available for storing thousands of pounds of each food item. If workers find that an item is running low, they can simply call a warehouse and have it trucked in within a day.

Perhaps the most colorful setting of all self-service centers is the one in Shawnee County, Kansas. The food donation center there is located on the county fairgrounds at Topeka.

Just like all the others, the center at Topeka is as similar to a supermarket as anyone can arrange. It serves about 6,000 residents and

stocks more than 20 different foods.

The center was set up by the State Department of Welfare in cooperation with the Food and Nutrition Service and financed by the County Welfare Board. The board continues to pay for operating the facility and the County Welfare Department determines which families may receive free food.

In a pre-opening of the center last summer, 39 families passed through two check-out lines in the first hour of operation. County officials esti-

mate that soon the center will average 125 families a day.

The Food and Nutrition Service has developed a new slide series and a detailed narrative guide on self-service conversion for food center managers. Both are available from State distributing agencies. ☆

This article was written by Milton Sloane with contributions from Wendy Young and Carl Sorenson in Dallas and Charles Weirauch in Chicago.

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